



News From

JACK DOYLE

MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

For Immediate Release

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COUNTY PROTECTS RESIDENTS AGAINST WEST NILE VIRUS

Monroe County Executive Jack Doyle today announced that the risk of contracting West Nile virus (WNV) from infected mosquitoes is greatest now through mid-September and he urged residents, especially those over age 50 and/or people with chronic illness, to protect themselves. In addition, Doyle announced municipal cooperation for applying larvicide in catch basins around the county to help reduce the mosquito population.

"Although there have not been any human cases in New York State so far this year, we want our residents, particularly our older neighbors, to remain vigilant for the rest of the summer and to take appropriate precautions against West Nile virus," said Doyle.

To help protect residents, the county has printed a revised informational brochure and will distribute it to pharmacies, public libraries, parks, and town and village halls next week. Also, a TV commercial is currently airing, and a radio commercial will soon begin airing, which encourages residents to execute protective measures when spending time outside.

The Monroe County Health Department has identified locations within the county that have the highest concentrations of older residents using GIS mapping software. The county is working with municipal Highway/Public Works Departments to apply larvicide to catch basins and roadside ditches, where appropriate, to prevent larvae from developing into adult mosquitoes. Larviciding is nearly complete in the town of Greece. Numerous other locations are scheduled throughout the fall.

All of the human cases of WNV that occurred in the New York city area are thought to have resulted from the bite of an infected mosquito from mid-to-late August through mid-September.

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“Preventive measures, including prudent use of insect repellents and avoidance of times of day when mosquitoes are most active—dusk to dawn—will be stressed during the six-week media campaign,” said Monroe County Health Director Dr. Andrew Doniger.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), very few mosquitoes – much less than 1% - carry WNV. If bitten by an infected mosquito, less than 1% of people become seriously ill; most people will exhibit no symptoms or have mild flu-like symptoms. It usually takes five to 15 days from the time a bite occurs to develop symptoms. Although there is no vaccine or specific treatment, if a person develops severe symptoms, such as a high fever and headache, they should consult a doctor.

Employees from the County Department of Health division of Environmental Health are collecting and testing adult mosquitoes. Adult mosquitoes are trapped at 10 locations in the county and tested for WNV. Similarly, mosquitoes in the larval stage are scooped from various waterways in Monroe County and identified microscopically to determine the level of a particular species. County Disease Control staff are in close contact with health care providers and laboratories to assure rapid diagnosis of suspected human cases of WNV.

Monroe County residents have reported nearly 300 dead crows this summer. Sixty-seven birds were submitted for testing; results to-date have all tested negative. Statewide, 53 birds have tested positive.

An information line has been established to report dead crows and to play a recorded message about WNV. The number is: **234.9600**.

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